

<b>Title:</b> Connect the Dots	<b>Grade:</b> 7th-8th Grades
<b>Content:</b> English Language Arts	<b>Duration:</b> 30 minutes

**Standard:**

- **RI 7-8.13:** Read and comprehend high quality informational text of appropriate quantitative and qualitative complexity.
- **W 7-8.7:** Generate additional related, focused questions for discussion.

**Objective:** Develop a concept map which “connects the dots” between what you are learning and how it’s relevant to your life.

**Resources Needed:**

- *Herd Behavior* article and/or [Video Segment](#) (3-5 minutes)
- blank paper, pen, or pencil

**Introduction/Description:**

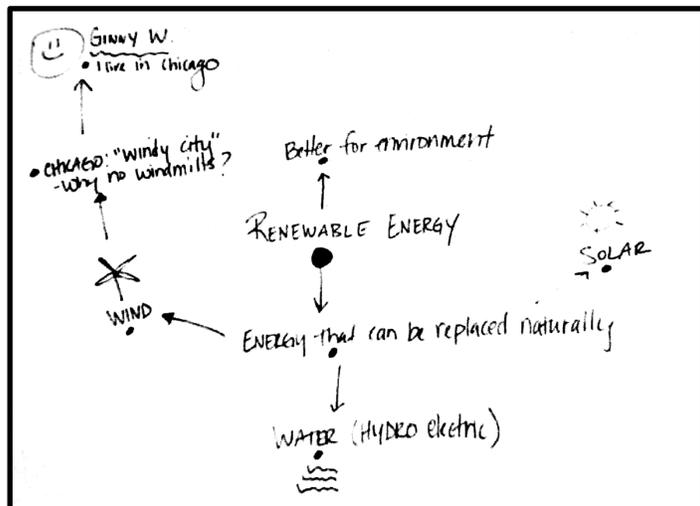
In order for new information to make its way into long-term memory, we must be able to answer two important questions: “Does this make sense?” and “Does this have meaning?” There’s a higher probability we will remember something if it is relevant to our lives, so connecting new learning to something already learned will help understand and retain.

Today you are going to apply this principle using a strategy called “Connecting the Dots.” Let’s take a look at the example below.

Ginny watches a short video about **renewable energy**. She begins her activity by putting the title above a large dot in the middle. In the upper left-hand corner, she puts her name and a small dot. **The idea is to find if/how renewable energy is relevant to her by making and connecting dots as she watches the video.**

Every few moments, she pauses the video and adds a piece of new information she learns about renewable energy, placing a new dot with a sketch or some words: a practice which will help her remember the new information. She connects any dots that she feels go together.

Look, she isn’t finished, but she’s already found one connection to herself. She’ll never again forget to think about wind when she hears talk of renewable energy!



**Steps:**

- You will read the article below entitled “Herd Behavior” and/or view the video link (above in blue type).
- Place a **large dot** in the center of your paper and **write the topic** just above the dot.
- Place a **dot** at the top of the page and write your **name** next to it.
- Read the article or play the video, **pausing often** when you hear something worth noting.
- Each time you pause, **add a dot** along with a note or sketch of what you want to remember.
- Every time you add a new dot, **determine if it relates** to any other dots; **if so, connect the dots!** (It makes note taking fun!) Think, especially, how the new information relates to YOU!
- **Repeat** this process throughout the duration of the video or reading.
- This activity helps you make sense of what you read by making connections: connections in the text and connections to your life. I like it!
- On an empty section of your paper, **write 2-3 questions** you could ask classmates in a class discussion on herd behavior..

**Finished Product:** Paper with dot-to-dot notes and a 2-3 sentence response.

**Adaptations:**

- Share your project with your teacher and/or peers as directed.
- Teachers, this is a great article for students to discuss. Have a Zoom meeting!
- Students, compare your concept map with others', analyzing similarities and differences. Learn from each other!

*See article below.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Herd Behavior

By CommonLit Staff  
2014

*"Herd behavior" is a term used to describe the tendency of individuals to think and act as a group. As you read, take notes on the causes of herd behavior.*

### Background

- [1] The term "herd behavior" comes from the behavior of animals in herds, particularly when they are in a dangerous situation such as escaping a predator. All of the animals band closely together in a group and, in panic mode, move together as a unit. It is very unusual for a member of the herd to stray from the movement of the unit.



*"Herd of Goats" by Unknown is in the public domain.*

The term also applies to human behavior, and it usually describes large numbers of people acting the same way at the same time. It often has a connotation<sup>1</sup> of irrationality, as people's actions are driven by emotion rather than by thinking through a situation. Human herd behavior can be observed at large-scale demonstrations, riots, strikes, religious gatherings, sports events, and outbreaks of mob violence. When herd behavior sets in, an individual person's judgment and opinion-forming process shut down as he or she automatically follows the group's movement and behavior.

### Examples of Herd Behavior

Herd behavior in humans is frequently observed at times of danger and panic; for example, a fire in a building often causes herd behavior, with people often suspending their individual reasoning and fleeing together in a pack. People in a crisis that requires escape will attempt to move faster than normal, copy the actions of others, interact physically with each other, and ignore alternative strategies in favor of following the mass escape trend.

Another commonly cited example of human herd behavior is the phenomenon of stock market bubbles. Large stock market trends often begin and end with a mass frenzy of buying (bubbles) or selling (crashes). Many observers see these stock market trends as examples of herding behavior because individuals are driven by emotion rather than reason to "join the crowd"; greed drives mass buying frenzies, and fear drives crashes.

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1. **Connotation (noun):** an idea or quality that a word expresses in addition to its meaning

## Behavior in Crowds

- [5] A more obvious example of human herd behavior occurs in dense public crowds or mobs. Crowds that gather because of a grievance or protest can involve herding behavior that becomes violent. Psychologists posit that a “group mind” can overtake a mob and embolden people to act in ways they would not individually, increasing the likelihood that situations become violent.

Sporting events can also create herd behavior on a violent scale. The football hooliganism prevalent in Europe in the 1980s is a well-known example of sports-related herding behavior and violence. Overzealous fans of football teams often engaged in unruly or destructive behavior in the name of supporting their team and intimidating the rival team, to the extent that people involved could be badly injured or even killed.

Some historians believe that Adolf Hitler purposefully took advantage of herd behavior psychology by planting a significant number of undercover German officers in the crowds at his speeches. These officers would enthusiastically cheer for Hitler, and the rest of the crowd followed suit, making it seem as if the entire crowd supported Hitler. These speeches would then be broadcast to a larger public audience, magnifying the effect.

## Everyday Decision-Making

Herd behavior does not always have such harmful effects; it can be influential in people’s everyday, simple decisions. For example, suppose that a family is walking down the street looking for a restaurant to have dinner. If they pass a restaurant that is empty and one that is relatively crowded with patrons, they are far more likely to choose the crowded one, on the assumption that it’s better because there are more people there. Herding can be subtle in this way; it simply involves people’s tendency to follow a crowd rather than carve out an individual path in many situations.

*“Herd Behavior” by CommonLit © 2014 is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.*